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Damn Anything That's Low

At the opening, plenary session of the American Council on Education in Chicago on October 14 three speakers addressed themselves to a common question: "Educational goals, content, and practices — what developments should we anticipate as we plan for expanding higher education?"

The speakers were: in the Natural Sciences, Joel N. Hildebrand, Professor Emeritus of Chemistry, University of California; in the Social Sciences, Howard W. Odum, Director, Institute for Research in the Social Sciences, University of North Carolina (Mr. Odum was unable to be present, but his paper was read by a colleague); in the Humanities, Douglas Bush, Professor of English, Harvard University.

Sharp Disagreement

Of the three addresses, the one delivered by Douglas Bush was most polished and most abrasive. It drew the sharpest rejoinders in the panel discussion which ensued.

Mr. Bush's principal concern seemed to be protection of the finest minds against dilution by a vast and unselective expansion of college and university enrollments. Incidentally, he expressed the opinion that the elite corps of superior students in America has been increasing in numbers.

His most direct answer to the question was to recommend that the expansion of education be restricted in such a way as to exclude from the universities students unfit for university work. By way of example, he cited the practice now in use in England of finding able students in the elementary schools and providing for the completion of their training through the university levels.

He said that in order to husband their resources universities should rigidly exclude courses of study impertinent to their central purposes. For example, he referred to the "battalions" of teachers of English composition on university campuses as a "monstrosity." They should, he thought, be abolished. Students who cannot read and write should not be admitted to the universities; — "somehow, some time, strictness and discipline have got to begin."

He condemned the influence of educationists and their dependence on John Dewey's "philosophy of barbarism." — Challenged on this point by one of the panelists, Mr. Bush said simply that he was "unrepentant." However, he explained that he objected specifically to Dewey's preference for the contemporary as opposed to the past, and most especially to Dewey's contention that one subject of study is as good as another.

In general, the response of the audience, composed chiefly of educational administrators, seemed to be unsympathetic to Mr. Bush's position. Opposition arose from a conception of "democratic process" which regards the elite, not as the antithesis of the general populace, but as the best part of it. In informal lobby conversations Mr. Bush's remarks were more acerbitously summarized: "Damn anything that's low!"

Science a Living Tree

Mr. Hildebrand presented the claims of scientific education appealingly, even ingenuously. Employing the analogy of a living tree, he argued that if a student begins his education with sound training in science, the branches (aesthetic, social, and political) will later sprout of themselves. In support of his position he read a theme written by one of his students, the wife of a graduate student in chemistry at Berkeley. The tone of the theme was enthusiastic: "Then one day in class I had my mind opened. I had read about Robert Hutchins' 'pyramid plan' of education, but I had not read about the 'Hildebrand Tree Plan'! I shall never forget it because it really made me think . . . I understand now my husband's passion for science to the exclusion of many other fields."

Mr. Hildebrand admitted that under pressure of time he was forced to use in his remarks some "half truths." But a half truth in argument, he observed, is like a half brick: "It is just as effective as a whole one, and it carries better."

Social Maturity

The paper prepared by Howard Odum began with a concise history of university education in America. Conceiving the essence of a university to be "freedom to study, to research, to teach, to write," Mr. Odum sketched a series of educational expansions forced by the changes and growth of a vigorous society. "The setting in which the University must survive is immeasurably more complex than could be even imagined back in the first decade of the century." He hoped that in the future the social sciences might contribute to the understanding of this complex setting, and to the understanding of the universities themselves. — "For all their jargon, the net result is that the social sciences are humane voices, whose tracery of 'what is' and 'how it became so' to millions of students must inevitably raise the level of social maturity."

Chairman of the plenary session was Chancellor Henry T. Heald of New York University. Introductory remarks were by President Gordon Keith Chalmers of Kenyon College, Chairman of the Problems and Policies Committee of the American Council on Education.

Henry W. Sams
University of Chicago
(CEA Representative at ACE Conference)

1954 NATIONAL CEA MEETING

Date: Tuesday, December 28. **Place:** Washington Room, The Statler, New York.

Theme: SEEING IT WHOLE

Presiding: William L. Werner, Professor of American Literature, Pennsylvania State University. President, CEA.

Program Chairman: Robert T. Fitzhugh, Associate Professor of English, Brooklyn College

2:30 - 3:30 p.m. Session I. **The Undergraduate**
Presiding: Norman Holmes Pearson, Associate Professor of English, Yale University
Speaker: Ernest Earnest, Head of the Department of English, Temple University

3:30 - 4:30 p.m. Session II. **The Adult**
Presiding: Bruce Dearing, Assistant Professor of English, Swarthmore College
Speaker: John B. Schwertman, Director, The Center for the Study of Liberal Education for Adults

4:30 - 5:30 p.m. Session III **The Profession**
Presiding: Kathrine Koller, Head of the Department of English, University of Rochester
Speaker: William R. Gaede, Dean, Brooklyn College

5:30 - 6:30 p.m. Cocktails, with The CSLEA as host

6:30 - 8:00 p.m. Buffet Supper and Business Meeting

Since the Washington Room accommodates only 125, those planning to attend should report as soon as they can. There is no registration fee. The meeting is open to non-CEA members. Tickets will be required. Correspondence should be addressed to the chairman of arrangements: Prof. Carl Lefevre, Departmnt of English, Pace College, 41 Park Row, New York 38, New York.

SEEING IT WHOLE
(National CEA Meeting, Hotel Statler, New York, Dec. 28, 1954)

Getting the idea of "Seeing It Whole" (theme of the 1954 National CEA meeting) established is the most important thing we can do. This means seeing the purposes of undergraduate English teaching in their relative importance, seeing the ways of achieving these purposes, seeing the ways of promoting their success (by selecting and promoting the right kind of teachers) and seeing that the student when he gets through has respect for liberal education, and especially for the English part of it.

The big job in undergraduate teaching is making the general student feel that English is for him. If intelligent and thoughtful people set out to achieve this end, they will achieve it, and without sacrificing "standards" either.

On the program Ernest Earnest will discuss the ways in which academic traditions often prevent educational success and indeed make it impossible. He suggests that his topic will be "Drift or Direction?"

John Schwertman will speak, from a wide experience, on what the liberal arts actually mean to our adults, what they should mean, and what means and methods can be employed to make liberal education more effective. He should have many suggestions of value to teachers of undergraduates.

Dean Gaede of Brooklyn College will discuss what the English teacher should be, how he must feel about his students and his opportunity, what his training should be, and what the relation should be between the teacher and his ad-

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The Challenge

Howard A. Burton's "Business, Pleasure, or Both?" in the Oct. **CEA Critic** poses a problem which well may become a major concern of the CEA Institute at Schenectady and of subsequent institutes also. If liberal arts graduates are to be happy in industry and business, more must be done to give their work the kind of meaning and value to which sensitive and imaginative people can respond; in other words, business must provide more breathing space for conscience and soul.

The kind of loyalty and creative endeavor of which liberal arts people are so eminently capable must be tapped by the concerns which employ them. Workers with a liberal arts background must be able to feel proud of their contributions.

In the East Lansing panel on "The Professor Views the Businessman" clear indications appeared that businessmen are becoming increasingly aware of this challenge. The future should see more, and more fruitful, attempts to do something about it.

GOOD READING AND THE CEA

Probably most CEA members know **Good Reading**, the annotated booklist for college students and adult readers which has evolved, through twenty-three years and numerous revisions, into the standard guide for supplementary and general reading widely known and used in most colleges and libraries. If perchance you don't know **G.R.** a postcard request to R. J. Crohn, New American Library, 501 Madison Ave., New York 22 will bring a free desk copy.

To date some 700,000 copies of GR have been printed and put to use, chiefly by undergraduates. Distribution now averages around 50,000 a year. Many colleges (usually in Freshman year) and some high schools require that all students own and use **Good Reading.**

How It Was Compiled

The Committee on College Reading, which edits **Good Reading,** was organized at Ohio State University by a group of English instructors attending a conference on "English for Engineers." The undersigned has served as chairman from the beginning, but his term of duty is nearly up. The intent of the original group was to pool resources and produce for general college use a list of about 1000 titles selected for three qualifications: significance, availability (preferably at low cost), and readability on the undergraduate level. That is still the basic purpose and, we think, the accomplishment of **Good Reading,** though a variety of useful text material now supplements the basic list.

Through the years, many additional members have been enlisted to service on the Committee, through organizational and personal contacts, and otherwise. There is also a small Advisory Board of noted authors, which was chairmanned first by John Erskine, now by Carl Carmer.

Revisions

In its earlier pamphlet form, **Good Reading** was distributed by the National Council of Teachers of English. Seven years ago it was expanded into a paperbound volume, being published as a "Mentor Book" by the New American Library of World Literature, Inc. This November, **GR** will be reissued in a partly revised, expanded form (at fifty cents a copy) with an important feature added: a 24-page "Checklist of Paperbound Editions," a classified compilation of 700 titles suitable for college use now available in 15 inexpensive series.

GR and CEA

Last spring your Executive Board authorized the cooperation of the College English Association with the Committee on College Reading in the complete revision of **Good Reading** scheduled for 1956. Presumably this will result in some form of official approval for the new edition by the CEA.

In the near future, a brief questionnaire about **GR** will be submitted to the CEA membership, in **The Critic** or by mail. Right now the Committee cordially invites interested CEA members to write its Secretary, Prof. J. Sherwood Weber, Pratt Insitute, Brooklyn 2, N.Y., either reporting experiences good or bad you have had in using **GR** with students; or volunteering to serve on the staff of consultants (instructors and librarians) to whom the Committee will submit special problems as they develop in the planning and the production of the revised edition; or both. If interested, please write right away.

On behalf of the Committee on College Reading, its chairman grasps this opportunity to express our pride and our deep satisfaction in being associated henceforth with the College English Association (of which, incidentally, the undersigned takes personal pride in being one of the very early members).

Atwood H. Townsend
New York University

PLEA FOR "AN ARISTOCRACY OF INTELLIGENCE"

As one who heard Mr. Brendan Sexton at the Michigan State CEA Institute and admired the vigor and conviction with which he spoke his piece, I was glad to see the prominence given what he had to say in the September issue of **The CEA Critic** ("The Countess Mara Tie?").

Mr. Sexton had some pertinent comments on the subject, "The Liberal Arts—Don't Fence Them Out," "Them" referring, as he put it, "to most of the adults in the United States." He asks that "people who work in the liberal arts give some thought to how liberal arts can serve a community in which so small a percentage of the population has access to the liberal arts." I find some ambiguity here in his use of the term "liberal arts." Is he referring to the subject matter of a curriculum in a liberal arts college, or to the enjoyment by the community of "liberal arts" in the sense of reading literature, listening to good music, etc.? What I have to say is strictly in the first sense, that of a sound liberal arts education in college.

Liberal Arts Not for Everyone!

For the latter, of course, don't fence anybody out, if he is educable. Mr. Sexton speaks about "the impossibility of having the goal of liberal education for a limited number of people," and says that his view of what is educationally "desirable implies that everyone should be the beneficiary of a liberal education." I'd surely agree that everyone should get as much liberal education as he can intellectually absorb and profit by. For many students, maybe the majority, however, general education as given in a good high school is about the limit. For saying that, I hope Mr. Sexton won't accuse me of the kind of "exclusiveness, superciliousness, snobbishness" he detects "in many places."

There seems to be a reluctance among some educators to admit that college, whether it's a combination of training in engineering, law, medicine, etc. and a liberal education to some degree, or a complete four-year program in liberal arts, is not for every high-school graduate. I'd like to see college restricted primarily to the better minds among our young men and women, for the incipient egg-heads, male and female. Let the others have an outright vocational training plus whatever little amount of liberal education they can absorb, at least enough to make them aware of what it is to be a good man and citizen.

If this be castigated as "elitism," so be it. I don't agree that "elitism" is so awfully undemocratic or anti-democratic. Given the frightful complexity of our time, the cold world war of ideas we're waging, we simply have to be more concerned than ever with producing what Thomas Jefferson, that well-known foe of democracy, referred to as an "aristocracy of intelligence." For those who think that this restriction of college students would depopulate our academic halls and classrooms, I refer to the recent report of the National Manpower Council, which indicated that less than half of our youth intellectually qualified for a college education actually gets one, and that the crowning failure of America in education is that so many of our truly intelligent young people fail to realize their intellectual potentialities in full. Of course, "Don't Fence Them Out!" But who's to see that they're not fenced out? Does the Welfare State concept include the educational welfare of our better young minds, and through that, the welfare and health of the whole country? Maybe the CIO-PAC can get working on that.

A New Liberalism

While we can appreciate Mr. Sexton's telling us to further an education "based on a more recent meaning of liberal," or what should be the characteristics of "a properly educated person," I hope

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"SWEENEY" BECOMES MODERN DANCE

To many people Eliot's "Sweeney" has always seemed bafflingly pointless: the hero sits stupidly in a third-rate restaurant gulping coffee; a scarlet lady tries to sit on his knees; another woman, Rachel Rabinovitch, ravenously devours grapes which she has seized from a waiter's passing tray; a heavy-eyed man grins grotesquely through a window after refusing an invitation to play craps; the bartender holds a whispered conversation. Such trivia take on significance only if the reader is able to catch the subtle hints of impending disaster: warning circles round the moon, dark clouds obscuring stars, the ill-omened raven lingering over seas hushed with ominous expectation, the Bolshevik name "Rabinovitch", which suggests hostile conspiracy. The poem concludes with an allusion to the murder of the Greek Agamemnon, who had also heard nightingales just before his wife Clytemnestra's secret lover Aegisthus knifed him from behind. For the poet, Sweeney is a symbol of the brutal modern world which moves disgustingly onward toward oblivion, unaware in its sluggish stupidity that all civilization is about to disintegrate, "not with a bang but a whimper."

A New Approach

The first time I read "Sweeney," in the summer of 1950, the thought occurred to me that Eliot might have composed the poem with ballet in mind. At any rate, much of the action seemed easily adaptable to dance movement: for example, the girl in the scarlet cape who whirls around Sweeney, the man in "mocha brown" who "contracts and concentrates," and the heavy-eyed man who "leaves the room and reappears outside the window leaning in." I took my idea to Mrs. Daily Hill, director of our dance group, and pointed out the implications of the compressed forty lines. Her eyes began to glow, and when she made the inspired suggested that the Agamemnon allusion be acted out, using a lighted half-stage, I knew she had succumbed.

After "Sweeney" got into rehearsal, there were many misgivings. For one thing, it seemed for a while as if we would never find the right music. We wanted something modern, tragic, and yet with a touch of tenderness and pity in it. With a week to go we stumbled across a record which was just the mood we wanted: Richard Strauss's "Dance of the Seven Veils." For another thing, the participating students were dubious and bewildered, the faculty openly skeptical. During these weeks I had a recurring nightmare which consisted chiefly of an audience doubled up in convulsive laughter as they watched the performance. Gradually, however, the student dancers began to understand the poem and imbibe its mood; gradually, too, they became elated at the daring of the whole experiment. The ultimate result was an exciting performance which the audience enjoyed and which for the most part they also understood —thanks to simply written program notes and a reading of the poem in complete darkness before the dance began.

The Performance

Had Eliot seen the performance, I think he would have said that the modern dance version of "Sweeney" was truer to the spirit of the poem than the poem itself, and for the very reason that some deliberate alterations were made. Mrs. Hill shrewdly recognized at the very outset that the poem could never be danced if we shackled ourselves by following it in every detail. Therefore, in our interpretation, Sweeney drinks beer, not coffee, and the effects of the beer produce grotesque byplay with the lady in the scarlet cape; Rachel Rabinovitch is developed into a slithering sinister creature who snakes her way out from her table and with long fingers digs into the air toward Sweeney; when Sweeney hears nightingales, the dance version assumes that there passes through his mind a picture of Agamemnon's murder. In order to present this latter idea visually, the restaurant characters freeze into position at the sound of nightingales; the stage is blacked out except for a spotlight down right, which casts an eerie glow over the now silhouetted figures of Sweeney and his companions. Under the spotlight, Clytemnestra and her secret lover Aegisthus perform a dance portraying passionate love. Agamemnon appears, his arm extended upwards in the Greek manner of greeting. Clytemnestra whispers directions to her lover, pushes him behind a curtain, then pretends happiness at the sight of her husband. She maneuvers Agamemnon so that his back is toward Aegisthus, and the murderer moves in for the kill. The grotesque and yet noble and dignified contrast of the three Greeks in authentic costume side by side with the silhouetted figures of modern people in a restaurant produces a striking and exciting scene. At the moment that Agamemnon is stabbed, the spotlight controlling the Greek scene is blacked out and the light comes up on the main portion of the stage. Sweeney, now realizing his danger, whirls frantically to escape, but it is too late: the last we see of him, his head is buried on the table and his body quivers with fear as the dancers draw close to him and place their arms above him in an umbrella of death, while the man with heavy eyes leers through the "branches of wisteria." Thus the dance version acts out Eliot's "unwritten last stanza."

New and Wider Understanding

The success of our performance of "Sweeney" is highly significant. The myth that Eliot can never be understood save by sophisticates has been exploded. Some of the people who were most enthusiastic about the Hanover experiment were small town rural folk whose intelligence the sophisticate often underestimates. If Eliot is presented sympathetically and simply, he can have as much appeal for the man in the street as Robert Frost. I am so convinced of this that I have already begun to speculate about the possibility of dancing the entire **Waste Land** — say in three acts, to last a whole evening.

Leland Miles
Hanover College

PLEA FOR "AN"

(Continued From Page 2)

he won't mind my saying that many educators have long and strenuously been trying to give to America exactly the kind of citizen he describes. Included among these valiant men, perhaps the most forthright and eloquent defenders of the kind of liberal education Mr. Sexton speaks of are the gentlemen who preside now over "those places where the liberal arts are festooned with the thickest ivy"; namely, Nathan Pusey, president of Harvard, and Alfred Whitney Griswold, president of Yale. Dr. Dodds of Princeton doesn't do so badly, either.

Brother Cormac Philip, F.S.C.
Manhattan College

SEEING IT WHOLE

(Continued From Page 1)

ministration — if liberal education is to be effective for contemporary American undergraduates.

The whole theme of the meeting should be vision, opportunity, faith — not attack. The main point is that if we justify ourselves by saying we are humanists, we had better be sure we're humanizing. If we are, we need have no fears, and we can take great satisfaction and point with pride. But we must remember Brendan Sexton's challenge (Sept. CEA Critic).

All the speakers have faith and vision, all are men of humor and wide experience. I have faith that in the three hours or so we can lay down a challenge of our own that no teacher or English department can ignore, although many no doubt will.

Robert T. Fitzhugh
Brooklyn College

Iowa Conference

The Iowa Colleges Conference on English met Oct. 8 and 9 to discuss "Values to Stress in the Reading Done in the Freshman English or Communications Course," "Literature Courses for the Non-English Major," and "English as a Preparation for Business and Government Service." The dinner lecture was given by Prof. James Gray, Univ. of Minnesota.

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THE SCHOLAR AND HIS READER

I have just sent off a review of a scholarly book to a large metropolitan newspaper and I feel worried. Have I fulfilled my obligation to the nowspaper — which has been kind enough to provide me, from time to time, with representative samples of contemporary literature and literary scholarship — to the author of the book, to the publisher, and to the reader?

Radical Changes Needed

It is clear to me that both the author — a distinguished professor of English — and the publisher — a leading university press — have made an attempt to appeal to larger readership than the limited group engaged in academic scholarship provides. I approve of their effort, but I predict that it will fail — because it is not good enough. The concessions they have made — the elimination of footnotes and the use of good paper, readable type, and attractive format — are too minor to be of much avail. In order to achieve the enlargement of readership for scholearly books more radical changes will have to be made.

Unless we who teach in liberal arts colleges, and especially in departments of English, are willing to admit that our work has been ineffectual, we must assume that among the hundreds of thousands of our graduates there is a sizeable audience for most of the books we write. We have lectured to them and examined them on the values of curiosity, facts, sources, ideas — in a word, scholarship — and may reasonably expect them not to be frightened by books that exemplify what we have preached. If then we still fail to engage their attention, after they leave our classrooms, we must have the courage to conclude that the books we and our presses ask them to buy do not constitute good reading for them.

And the truth is, it seems to me, that they do not, because most of us have been trained in a tradition which considers readability either unimportant or an indication of superficiality.

Readability and Scholarship

I am reminded of a young friend who some years ago received an M. A. from a standard university. He wrote his thesis on a then prominent contemporary American belletrist who had, in one phase of his work, described the transition of American civilization from agricultural to urban. The professor in charge of the young man's major read the thesis and refused to approve it. "I don't quite know," he admitted, "what is wrong with it but it somehow does not read like a thesis. It's interesting; and that, I am afraid, is where the trouble lies." He then advised the young man to incorporate into his thesis a number of statistical tables showing the shifts in population from agricultural to urban for a number of decades. The young man complied, received his degree, but later threw the statistics out and had the book published; it received excellent reviews.

The tradition that scholarship must not be interesting is still too much with us. A learned book, it is still believed, must give the impression of solidity, thoroughness, definitiveness, depth. Too often that impression is all that we do get. But about such books it is not worth writing. The Shaw book which I received and which stimulated me, is decidedly worth writing about. Its scholarship is beyond question and the author's own ideas are fresh and challenging. All the more regrettable that it should alienate the "average" reader by its forbidding style. Why, after all, should this reader be interested in a book which is obviously not addressed to him?

Insight Needed

Fear of our colleagues — who all too often are seeking an opportunity to display the thoroughness of their knowledge at our expense —is no doubt also responsible for our overweighting the text with names of other scholars who have labored in our vineyard. A sentence such as "Frank Harris goes even beyond Duffin, Hamon, and Henderson in his admiration for the play" indicates that the author has read four commentators on Shaw — and in the succeeding three paragraphs he manages to disclose his knowledge of six more — but doesn't it also block the flow of the scholar's own ideas? Except to the specialist, the names of these commentators mean nothing.

We cannot hope to eradicate the fear which haunts the scholar. Perhaps, however, we can observe more faithfully the old principle of good writing: that an author should be so saturated with the facts that he makes no statement which does violence to them. Facts in themselves, however, do not make a book; certainly not a literary study. Unless a scholar has absorbed the facts so thoroughly that they can serve as a solid foundation upon which he can build a structure of critical ideas he has no book to write. It is his critical ideas — and his insight and imagination — which constitute his contribution; but he must have the courage to permit them to operate.

There is something ironic about treating a writer like GBS, who has given pleasure to millions of people, in such a way that he appears to be frighteningly dull. It may be too much to ask that the scholar, like Shaw, scintillate, but it is not too much to expect that his scholarship be presented in such a way that a reader will be impelled to turn to Shaw himself in anticipation of pleasure. Much of the solemnity of scholarship is a result of timidity. To be a "serious" scholar is a worthy ambition, but the sense in which we take the adjective is too literal.

Banish Fear!

George Saintsbury once remarked that "the first duty of the novelist is to let himself be read." Should not this also be the first duty of the literary scholar? Let us be honest and admit that we want as large a reading public for our books as we can get. One way of getting it is to stop worrying about the few peers in our chosen field, to stop mincing along as if on an icy pavement. All we need to do is, having made sure that the pavement is solid, to step forth boldly and continue in a natural way. Our gait need be neither awkward nor painful, but easy and attractive.

N. Bryllion Fagin
The Johns Hopkins University

THE FAITH OF THE HUMANIST

(The following is a digest prepared by Warren L. Fleischauer, National Executive Secretary of Lambda Iota Tau, National Collegiate Literature Honorary Society for Students of English and Foreign Languages, of an address by Louis I. Bredvold at the National Incorporation Dinner of the society at Michigan State College, East Lansing, Mich., Saturday, March 6, 1954. Prof. Bredvold's audience was comprised of literature students from Michigan State, Aquinas College, Purdue University, Sioux Falls (S. D.) College, Mercy College, Baldwin-Wallace College, University of Detroit, and Marygrove College. The redactionist hopes that he has caught something of Prof. Bredvold's devastating irony and deft phrasing.)

Praising science and declaring that humanists are too adversely critical of scientists, Prof. Bredvold conjured up the fantastic universe of the physicist and astronomer, a universe in which man is merely a mass of molecules whirling through an infinity of light years. Such mathematically precise knowledge he described as "interesting," and urged his humanist audience to be kind to the scientist, although he did suggest that physicists were overpaid, their problems, however apparently recondite, being actually simple and capable of formulation with a pencil and a pad of paper.

By contrast, the problems faced by the humanist are infinitely complex. The scientist deals with mathematical truth, but the humanist is concerned with wisdom, whose rarity in the modern world is demonstrated by the infrequent use of the word "wisdom" these days in anything but commencement addresses, and seldom even in them.

Man Remains a Miracle

Science presents us with a view of the universe which is remote and meaningless from the standpoint of human values and practical considerations. True, physics can give us an incredible picture of an infinity of atoms and eons of time, but it fails to account for the first miracle, the miracle of the scientist himself. The importance of man, the miracle of man, lies in his controlling consciousness and man's sense of responsibility. Responsibility is something which we have recently observed the scientist to disavow, yet it is this responsibility, this consciousness, which is the concern and preoccupation of the humanities.

It is only through literature and the other humanities, as well as the great masterpieces of art and music, that we can arrive at man's view of man, and such a view is essential to the prudent conduct of our infinitely complex, unmathematical and unpredictable human affairs. To meet human problems adequately requires wisdom, the kind of wisdom that we may glean from the great classics and that the teacher of literature, the humanist, dispenses. It is the classics of the humanities and the masterpieces of the arts which, in a sense more important than science can possibly conceive, constitute the environment in which man, as a conscious and ethical creature, must live.

Living versus Existing

Literature, the arts, and the humanities, comprise the world in which we, as human beings, actually live, but science can, at best, describe for us only the world in which we can exist. If we wish to live, not merely exist, we must concern ourselves with the humanities as the important and compelling factor in man's environment. Such, said Prof. Brevold, is the faith of the humanist, the faith of the student of literature, who wishes to live, not merely to exist.

Warren L. Fleischauer
Michigan State College

NEW ENGLAND ANTHOLOGY

The Pleasant Compulsion

Everyone knows of those literary groups which meet every other Tuesday—for about four months. During that period their members suffer through one another's versifying; then the veneer of Culture wears thin, the latent prejudices appear: whereupon follows either frank boredom or an open fight, and at last the group disbands forever.

Literary Society

Mr. David Clark, an instructor in English at the University of Massachusetts, conceived an idea of a Literary Society, however, which bids fair to last. He shared the idea with some other instructors in his department (principally, Prof. Leon Barron, Mr. Richard Haven, and me) together with others they have developed it.

The idea is integration, the integration of individual selves. Mass-disintegration seems easy enough: everywhere we see bombs, machines, material things riding hordes of human beings to distraction and often to death. But what to do about it? The idea of these university instructors was not to reject material things out of hand, but to develop individual minds and hearts—their own included—which could put material things and spiritual things in a more equal proportion. Literature — particularly poetry — seemed still one of the best places where such integration could be observed and practised outside the curriculum so that even instructors could hope to understand.

The idea of this sort of extra-curricular education, having attracted a few other members of the English Department, attracted also several teachers and students from various disciplines — all of whom felt the need of its embodiment on their campus. The group met frequently — every Tuesday night — in the spring of 1952. Because of the initial response to the venture, a Literary Society was formally organized in the fall of 1953 with a Board of Trustees. Further, a special Poetry Room for meetings and for individual work was obtained and formally opened on campus at a ceremony in which Messrs. Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren were the chief speakers.

Related Project

About the same time the undertaking of a related project became possible through a grant of money from the National Association of Educational Broadcasters. The Chairman of the Society became the NAEB Project Supervisor as well, and various committees were formed to put into effect the total idea.

The total idea was extremely complex in execution, but can be made fairly simple in exposition. The idea was to extend the educational effect which the Literary Society had had upon its members. The opportunity to work outside the curriculum and with the minds which compose it had suggested the creative effect which such experiences can have. For the pleasant compulsion of art renovates its audience just as it renewed the artist. Those who undertook the project knew, then, that so long as poetry was to be the main fare, it didn't much matter with what theme the entire project was concerned.

Nevertheless they chose the theme of Freedom as offering the widest area to survey from diverse points of view. And they selected 15 New England poets to speak on the theme, as each individually conceived it. In a series of 10 taped radio recordings, (a series to be distributed for the next 20 years, perhaps, by NAEB), entitled **New England Anthology**, the following poets spoke their own poems and commented on Freedom:

1. Archibald MacLeish
2. Frank Prentice Rand and David Morton
3. Wallace Stevens
4. Robert Hillyer and John Holmes
5. Emily Dickinson (by Stephen Whicher)
6. Richard Wilbur and John Ciardi
7. E. E. Cummings
8. Richard Eberhart and Peter Viereck
9. Robert Francis and Arnold Kenseth
10. Robert Frost

As a result of their speaking, several fundamental generalizations concerning Freedom may be made which seem eminently worth making with respect to the idea of integration.

Political freedom is very nice and pleasant to enjoy, but as every New England poet involved in the project said or implied, it is a by-product and by no means the main article. That for which human beings are willing to risk their lives, in America and elsewhere, is not political freedom in itself, but is that which makes it conceivable, that which underlies it. And what upholds political freedom is a basic belief about the nature of humanity.

According to the poets of **New England Anthology**, the most inclusive belief about Man which makes all Freedom—including political freedom—possible, is the belief that each individual man has an inviolable soul which no Caesar can invade. Thus each man has a right to nourish his soul as the integrity dictates.

The poets in the project emphasized a related belief about Man, a belief concerning his imagination. When exercised or inspired, a man's imagination makes relations between various aspects of his experience. It is via the imagination, therefore, that he conceives a new idea: that is, a new way of understanding or of behaving or both.

Creative Form

But his neighbors have no way of judging the worth to themselves of a man's idea, until it takes some form they can understand. And here we come to the third belief about the nature of Man which the 15 poets expressed or implied. Each man has the capacity to give form to his individual experience and so communicate it to other men. All forms require some art in the making. But true Art is an organization of mind and heart which expresses its own local, individual experience with universal human validity. It may be known by its strong prejudice in favor of humanity, its conviction that every man has ability to shape his own experience. Thus the artist pleases us. He confirms our own beliefs about the nature of Man, encourages us in them, and—in addition—renovates us by guiding us to face associations we had never faced before. Thus he gives us ideas to which we in turn may give form, through these new relationships which only our own imaginations can make. He gives us a creation and, with it, matter for our own creativity.

What, then, of Freedom, if Form is so essential to understanding and to creation? Is there no risk of rigidity, of inflexibility? The poets of **New England Anthology** tell us, finally, that we run no risk beyond what we ask for. For Freedom takes shape like a poem; it is experience daring to find its own form.

Other projects are now underway, but the Literary Society seeking integration of its individual selves, reports arrival at a significant way-station. The pleasant compulsion of Art has shown itself, again, to be the best way of inducing the individual mind to effort. For the individual heart is there renewed with the 'artists'. And, as E. E. Cummings has put it: "love is the whole and more than all".

Robert G. Tucker
University of Massachusetts

New Publishing Idea

To keep good books from the past in print without either raising the price or suffering losses on small printings, Alfred A. Knopf is experimenting with a new series of paper backs called **Vintage Books** and selling for ninety-five cents each.

The publisher expects that at this low price sales will increase sufficiently to warrent larger printings than would otherwise be possible, thus moving the maintenance of the publisher's back list from the unprofitable to the profitable column. If successful, perhaps this idea will appeal to other publishers also.

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Fleshing The Sword

(Informal and Post-prandial Remarks at the Concluding Session, Sixth College English Association Institute, The Kellogg Center for Continuing Education, Michigan State College, June 25, 1954.)

Apparently I have a reputation as a fellow who asks sharp and embarrassing questions, and I'd like to ask one or two now, suggest the answers, and make a comment.

During the first CEA Institute, at the University of Massachusetts, in 1952, Vincent Brennan, Personnel Director for Bloomingdale's in New York, put the first question I want to ask. He said that, in his experience, far too many liberal arts graduates had been conditioned consciously by their teachers to feel that business was somehow beneath their dignity. They emerged from college with an attitude that made them useless to an employer. They were unwilling to assume the burdens of getting the world's work done and seemed to feel that because they appreciated fine things, somebody owed them a living.

Vin Brennan suggested that we weren't liberalizing students if we turned them out like that. I would ask—do we really liberalize our students, or do we do what Mr. Brennan suggested? And if we do 'liberalize' any students, isn't it likely to be a rather select group—perhaps the dilettantes? The sort of men students who hang around English offices, and the girls who are waiting for marriage, who have nothing to do, and who don't even want to teach?

What Is Liberalizing?

My next question is this—just what is this liberalizing process we have talked about here so freely, as if we had it neatly classified? What is this process that produces the whole man? And what is the 'whole man'? Where is he to be found? Has anybody met him recently? Mr. Sexton commented that the liberalizing process too frequently was equated with ability to wear a Brooks Brothers suit and a Countess Mara tie. I think there's something to what he said.

I would like to suggest what the liberalizing process is, and I don't think it is the same thing as going to college and taking liberal arts courses. We all know people who are liberal and humane and who are not well educated, and we all know a lot of people who are well educated and who are not liberal and humane.

The liberalizing process seems to me one of self-examination — a coming to convictions about what one is for and about the relationship in which one stands to himself and his fellows and to those things which are beyond self-convictions which lead one to be decent and kindly and tolerant. The process can be sophisticated, through the study of literature and history and formal philosophy. But there are other ways—good ways. And whatever the way, if we claim that we are engaged in the process, we had better be sure that we are moderately successful. I'm not sure that what goes on in English classes has that result. But it should.

And I think we have to recognize the fact that, while not all Americans now get a shot at liberal education, a great many do. Methods must be devised and subject matter arranged to make liberal education valid for all the vastly increased audience. Either that, or the liberal arts can make no strong claim for support.

A Few Comments

So much for questions. Now a couple of comments. There has been too much fraternal piety at this meeting, just as there always is at meetings of this sort. People get up and say, "It was a good thing that we all got together to find common ground." (If you choose your extremes, it is easy to find comfortable common ground.) The words **explore** and **define** are great favorites on these occasions, and after you get through exploring and defining and finding common ground and passing compliments on how well you've explored and defined and found common ground, you all go home, with a resolution to continue this fine beginning in the next session when you can explore and define and find more common ground.

And this can go on practically forever if you can find hosts to provide you with nice meals and pleasant surroundings. And no doubt that's a worthy occupation, but it doesn't do much to make the liberal arts a more valid and vital concern in American education. It is very much like Ibsen's Boyg who urged that it was much better to circle around a thing than to flesh one's sword in it. I want to see some sword fleshing.

Mr. Peter Siegle here—from the Center for the Study of Liberal Education for Adults — says that the time has come when this group much formulate some researchable questions. I quite agree, And forfulate not in the amiable manner of college bull sessions, but by determining what facts are needed and then going after them. What, for example, is our audience? What does it need? How can it be approached? The formulation of a half-dozen good questions might well lead to a grant to find some helpful answers, and they in turn would be a powerful prod to action.

Some Suspicions

Finally, I have a few suspicions about this meeting. First, I suspect that many businessmen here don't know what we're talking about yet. When they say "a liberal education," they mean one thing; and when we say "a liberal education," we mean something quite different. I have a strong suspicion that some business people here are chiefly interested in these meetings as a mechanism to sell business to the younger generation. I can't prove it, but I have the suspicion. And I suspect strongly, also, that professors who come here may be interested chiefly in getting money to support them in the pursuit of their hobbies under the guise of liberal education.

The thing that encourages me is that we meet in a notable spirit of good will. When men meet in that spirit and want to understand each other, they eventually come to understand each other. Not perhaps in intellectual terms as a result of question and definition, but shall we say, in marital terms, by living together. And that is the best way. I have great hopes that if we continue to live together we will come to understand each other.

If we do come to understand each other, and if the researchable questions are asked and answered, and if we desire to flesh our swords in the thing, what then?

Support the Liberal Arts!

Well, there have been two excellent suggestions. One was University of Massachusetts President Mather's on the opening day, that **if business and other people want to support the liberal arts, they should not just finance pilot studies and buildings, but put money into teachers and encourage them to go to work at the business they're supposed to work at.** Pilot studies and buildings and projects make good material for reports and releases, but the job to be done is to be done in the classroom.

The other suggestion has come from various speakers and it is simply that **liberal education must be made valid for our whole culture, and we are the people to make it so.** The best way to start is to begin.

May I refer to President Mather's hope that grace would descend on this group which has met here in the spirit of friendship and common concern, and may I suggest that if those who are here will carry away this grace with them and spread it, it will be literally true that the word here was the beginning of great and good things in many places? But may I suggest also that while in the beginning was the word, it is perhaps better said that in the beginning was the deed?

Robert T. Fitzhugh
Brooklyn College

Supplement

This month's supplement is a booklet, "English and Your Career," prepared for the students of Brooklyn College by Robert T. Fitzhugh, Anna M. Babey-Brooke, and Samuel Kliger.

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LIVING DANGEROUSLY
(A Plea for Cooperation)

As a onetime English Classics Major and former Associate Professor of English and Education I find myself deeply disturbed by the remarks of Lewis F. Ball in "A Little Learning is a Dangerous Thing" (**CEA Critic, April,** 1954). He makes allegations against professional education folks that just aren't so.

Knowledge Not Transmitted

As an indication of good faith at the outset, let's admit that Prof. Ball's contentions that today's college students can't spell, don't know formal grammar, have neither taste nor appreciation, and are unable to read, particularly in the area of poetry, are well founded.

But to subscribe to his prescription of "the transmission of a liberal education...(and) training in the basic disciplines" is quite something else. This is not to say that we shouldn't be strongly concerned with a first-rate general education, including its liberal aspects, but to believe that such knowledge can be transmitted is to ignore at least one of the basic principles of learning: we learn what we live and experience, accepting only that which at that time has value for us. To pass on knowledge is to have someone else pass over it.

One might comment in a similar fashion regarding Prof. Ball's advocation of "training in the basic disciplines." The findings of modern psychology tell us quite clearly that they are a myth. But, again, belief in their non-existence does not preclude the necessity of making certain that children form adequate habits in performing tasks essential to effective living. No respectable educationist has ever insisted on sloppy work. A good many professional education folks are highly disturbed about this state of affairs. They would like to see some effective action, but they know that no real strides can be made until teaching methods are changed. Except in the very early grades they have not been. Go visit upper elementary and secondary schools most anywhere. See if there is much difference in the methods employed today and when you and I were taught. We'll hear more about this later on.

Both And

"It is quite possible," writes Prof. Ball, "that an acquaintance with Virgil and Chaucer and Browning may teach them more of moral evils and of good than afternoon excursions to the local sewage plant or the gas works." Aside from the fact that today's secondary English classrooms are perfect examples of gas works, Prof. Ball dreadfully oversimplifies the issue. Teacher-student excursions into first-rate literature are highly admirable. So are correctly-guided experiences into the problems of community living. It's not, then, a question of either/or! it's a matter of both/and.

Prepare for This World

Let's turn now to his direct charges against professional educationists, echoes of Lynd and Bestor, et al. First Prof. Ball blasts us for being a vested, self-perpetuating interest. Any profession sets its own standards, holding that certain competencies are essential. (Yours, Prof Ball, certainly does). This is not to say that we shouldn't examine ourselves, continually evaluating our efforts.

Second, the gentleman from Richmond, without understanding the tenets of either, holds that we worship Dewey and Kilpatrick. Most of us subscribe to the truth where we find it, from philosophy, psychology, and so on. By taking fixed moral law as a point of departure in determining what should be taught we employ, as Mr. Sidney Hook so admirably points out, ("Modern Education and Its Critics," reprint from the **Seventh Yearbook of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education,** Oneonta, New York, 1954) theological, untested "principles" instead of using the findings of psychology and current philosophy. We must consider the individual in this, the current, living world. Let the church prepare him for the next one.

Aristocrats vs. Democrats

"Third," continues Brother Ball, "they cherish an abiding prejudice against any relic of the old aristocratic system. This system emphasized content; it was intended for the sons of gentlemen; it is old. Therefore, content, or as they put it, 'reactionary subject-matter courses' cannot be endured." I agree with part of what Prof. Ball says we believe. Surely, let the private school adhere to the aristocratic. Like the Greeks who had slaves, private school patrons can lead a life of leisure. Public school products, on the other hand, the workers, need guidance in learning how to use leisure time effectively. Let's make effective use of the treasures of antiquity, but let's remember that millions of democrats need to know how to use far more resources to live positively

I cannot, however, go along with his charge that we have no use for content. The issue is how to employ it. We believe in utilizing subject-matter psychologically, using it when we and the students together see the need for it. Prof. Ball wants it dished out chronologically and intact, barely fit even for adult consumption.

Scholarship?

Fourth, we are charged with distrusting scholarship, especially in our graduate schools, "because it is so remote from (our) own trivia as to surpass (our) comprehension." Possibly, now and then, we could require more careful work in our doctoral dissertations. Are all English doctoral theses well done? How many are really important? Who cares about the symbolic significance of a certain type of nail the carpenter used in making the coffin aboard Ahab's Pequod?

"Fifth," says he, "Little minds are inevitably attracted to jargon .....educationism needs cant and cackle. It is their liturgy." This remark, smacking of Bestor's "best," is unfair. I would be the first to admit that we have exceeded ourselves in the manufacture of new words; yet I would insist, as I have above, that any profession requires a unique vocabulary, and I would make no more apologies for the need for the "Dictionary of Education" than for that of Psychology.

Too Much Education?

Respectable educationists would also deny the charge that required educcation courses are so numberous as to dominate the prospective teacher's college curriculum. In Texas, for example, the neophyte highschool English teacher would have taken about thirty-six hours in her major and only twenty-four education hours for the permanent certificate; indeed, she could obtain a teaching position with as little as twelve hours of Education. Furthermore, the median for beginning U. S. highschool teachers in 1951 was only eighteen semester hours in Education. (See T. M. Stinnett, "Accreditation and Professionalization of Teaching,"**Journal of Teacher Education,** 3:33-34, March, 1952.)

They would also scream at Mr. Ball's statements that a degree in Education is "an easy way out for the mediocre." "I do not propose to dwell upon the debasing of the Doctor's degree by the advent of the ersatz Doctor of Education," he writes further. Possibly he is unaware that the only real difference between the two degrees is that statistics, a research tool, is required for the Ed.D., whereas foreign languages, supposedly a research tool, (how often is it used in doctoral dissertations?) is required for the Ph.D.

That the public has allowed educationists a rather free reign is not to be denied. The writer would agree with Prof. Ball that this condition exists and that one reason is that the general public falls back on the 'Let George do it—I'm too busy' excuse, but he would not agree that swanky buildings and repetition and incantation by educationists have allured them. It is simply that the general public has not realized that it is their task to work with teachers, administrators, and educationists for better schooling. Actually, professional educators are endeavoring to work with the lay public and are not trying to sell them.

Let's Learn to Teach

Now let's turn to the final phase of Prof. Ball's assertions, those pertaining to the upgrading of the English teacher's preparation. First, he maintains, much more composition must be required, papers being graded completely and regularly. There is no room for quarrel here, for we see eye to eye. The question is how? The papers a person writes all through

(Continued On Page 8, Col. 1)

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Theme (tentative): The Liberal Arts: An Ingredient?

Committee: Harold W. Blodgett (Union, Pres. NYCEA); Milton M. Enzer (Yale & Towne), Committee on CEA Institute Development; Maxwell H. Goldberg (CEA Institute Director); Harold Van de Car (Director of Development, Union College); George A. Rietz (Manager, educational grants and services, G. E.); Peter Siegle (CSLEA) Committee to be enlarged.

Cooperating: Center for the Study of Liberal Education for Adults; Univ. of Mass.; NY-CEA.

N.B. Since facilities are limited, CEA members planning to attend should inform the committee by way of Maxwell H. Goldberg. National CEA members will pay a minimum service fee. Following their opportunity to make tentative reservations, invitations will be more widely extended. The CEA conferences stress varied academic and industrial participation. Before long a systematic effort will be made to invite participation outside CEA circles.

LIVING DANGEROUSLY
(Continued From Page 7)

public school and college, particularly if he majors in English, would fill a large trash barrel. As was indicated earlier, teaching methods in actual practice have not, by and large, changed one iota. The fault lies in the traditional system. Let's heed the findings of modern psychology and learn how to teach reading, writing, speech, drama, poetry, and so on — all along the line and up the ladder. The same comments are applicable concerning Prof. Ball's request for emphasis on spelling and formal grammar. Methods are available, ready to be employed.

The products of modern teaching techniques, where given a fair chance, have shown plenty of incentive, a personal quality the gentleman from Virginia would like to see given particular emphasis. But how can one expect initiative to be devolped when everyone is expected to do the same teacher-assigned work at the same time? To hold to such a practice is to do precisely what Prof. Ball cries that modern education does — grading pupils "like eggs, according to size." Modern teachers would prefer to evalute each child on his own merits, in competition with himself. To have been a slave for twelve years in the public school means to be severely handicapped psychologically when dumped into the competitive, academic mill, higher education. When the student needs incentive and courage most, he has it least.

No upright, honest professional educator would be "in favor of a twelve-year program of spoon-feeding and baby sitting," either, Prof. Ball. This is not what we advocate; we are drastically misunderstood. Yet you hold that we are so far gone that trusting us with methods of professional teacher-training is all that you would allow, and even then under duress. Furthermore, you accuse us of opposing the raising of college entrance standards at a time when we are actively endeavoring to upgrade entrance requirements in our own departments!

Cooperation Needed

Liberal arts and teacher-preparing faculty members ought to get together on their own campuses and also on much broader levels in an effort to call off the cold war. We have a job to do together. We need you, for we desperately need teachers well-grounded in content. You need us — all through the teacher-preparation program and not just at the end — in order that prospective teachers will know how to employ the content gained under your direction, in order that they may know why we have schools and what their tasks are, in order that they may know children and teaching conditions at first hand through adequately-guided, many-sided experiences, including a first-rate knowledge, gained on the firing-line, of how learning really occurs. We cannot prepare real teachers for today's society without help, then, from you. Other fields, too, must make their contribution: philosophy, psychology, anthropology, and public administration. Let's live dangerously — trying not only to get along but to work together!

Chester S. Williams
North Texas State College

N.C., Va., W. Va., CEA

The North Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia CEA held its fall conference Oct. 16 on the general theme: "Training in English as a foundation for successful and efficient service in business and industry." In the morning session a panel discussed "The background training in language and literature necessary for intelligent leadership in business and industry." The luncheon talk by Jonathan Daniels, editor of the Raleigh **News and Observer**, was on "The journalist and the humanities." The afternoon session was devoted to a series of discussions of practical methods of meeting the problem of training for business leadership. Host institution was North Carolina State College.

George Abbe, author of **The Wide Plains Roar** and other books of verse, has joined the English dept. at Springfield College. He is working on a text explaining modern poetry, to be called **You and Modern Poetry.**

Bureau of Appointments at New York

The CEA Bureau of Appointments is maintained by Albert Madeira (Box 472, Amherst, Mass.) as a service to CEA members. The only charge, in addition to national CEA membership, is $5.00 for a twelve-month registration. Registrants who are not CEA members should include with their registration fee the annual membership fee of $3.50—$1.00 for dues and $2.50 for subscription to the **CEA Critic.** Registration does not guarantee placement. Prospective employers are invited to use the services of the CEA Bureau of Appointments. (No charge.)

Bureau Registrants planning to be available for interviews in New York during the annual sessions should inform Albert Madeira at once. As soon as possible, they should let the Bureau know where they may be reached while in New York. If they are in doubt as to the status of their registration, they should ask that this be checked by the Bureau.

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